

NY Reps, 9/11 Responders & Survivors, Union Leaders Demand Senate Republicans Stop Obstructing 9/11 Health Bill

Friday, 10 December 2010

New York, NY - Today at Ground Zero, U.S. Reps. Carolyn Maloney and Jerrold Nadler, the authors of H.R. 847, the James Zadroga 9/11 Health and Compensation Act, joined John Feal of the FealGood Foundation, Catherine McVay Hughes of Manhattan Community Board 1, dozens of 9/11 responders and survivors, and union leaders to demand that Senate Republicans stop obstructing the passage of the Zadroga Act. Yesterday, Senate Republicans blocked the Zadroga Act from moving forward to a vote, even though the bill was supported by 58 Senators. With the impending Republican takeover of the House, the Senate must take action on the Zadroga Act before the end of the year if it is to have any realistic chance of becoming law.

"After 9/11, Republican Senators said they'd do whatever it takes to help New York recover, and that they'd never forget 9/11 - but yesterday they betrayed those promises, and they betrayed thousands of Americans who are sick because of the attacks. Republican Senators, you need to show us that 'Remember 9/11' isn't just a bumper sticker or a campaign slogan. You need to prove that you can put politics aside to do the right thing for the country. That's why you ran for office, isn't it?" said Maloney. "It's been nine years since the attacks, and the time for endless debate and delays is over. This is the last, best chance to pass the 9/11 health bill. The time to take action is now."

"I am thoroughly disgusted that 42 Members of the Senate would put partisanship ahead of patriotism and human beings," said Nadler. "By refusing to allow debate on the 9/11 Health and Compensation Act in what I can only call a cynical and selfish vote, the Senate Republicans have disrespected the plight of responders and survivors, and ignored the sacrifices of those who rushed to the site of the attacks on that day and after. These brave men and women deserve much better than this. Let us finally pass this bill and provide the justice that is due them."

In September, the House passed the Zadroga Act by a strong bipartisan vote of 268 to 160. The bill would provide guaranteed health care for those exposed to toxins released by the collapse of the World Trade Center towers. The bill would also reopen the federal September 11 Victim Compensation Fund to provide economic relief to those harmed by the attacks. The Zadroga Act's \$7.4 billion cost is fully paid-for through revenue offsets.

The Zadroga Act is historic, but not unprecedented, legislation. In the aftermath of the Pearl Harbor attacks, Congress passed the War Hazards Compensation Act of 1942, which provided health care and financial relief to civilians who helped recover the dead and salvage what remained of our Pacific fleet. By passing the Zadroga Act, Congress would once again demonstrate that our nation will not abandon those harmed by an attack on our shores.

Fact Sheet on H.R. 847, the 9/11 Health and Compensation Act:

What is the problem?

Thousands of first responders and others exposed to the toxins of Ground Zero are now injured and need our help. These include firefighters, rescue workers, responders, police officers and EMTs, U.S. military personnel, construction workers, cleanup workers, residents, area workers, and schoolchildren, among others. Their illnesses include a range of respiratory, gastrointestinal, and mental health conditions.

To date, an estimated 36,000 Americans have received treatment for 9/11-related illnesses and injuries. Over 53,000 responders are enrolled in medical monitoring. 71,000 individuals are enrolled in the WTC Health Registry, indicating that they were exposed to the toxins.

At least 10,000 people came from around the country to help in the aftermath of the attacks. They hail from every single state in the union and nearly every Congressional district. Many are sick and others are concerned about their future health. (Please click [here](#) for a list of Registry enrollments nationwide and in each congressional district.)

Those who have economic losses because of their 9/11-related illnesses need and deserve compensation, but have no alternative to the current litigation system. The WTC contractors and the City of New York have settled lawsuits filed by 10,500 WTC responders, but tens of thousands are sick who did not participate in the settlement, and may yet pursue legal action. They face great financial loss because they were asked to help at Ground Zero in the country's time of need.

How does H.R. 847 address the problem?

Provides medical monitoring and treatment to 9/11 responders and survivors (area workers, residents, students, and others) who were exposed to the toxins at Ground Zero.

Builds on the existing monitoring and treatment program by delivering expert medical treatment for these unique exposures at Centers of Excellence.

Reopens the 9/11 Victim Compensation Fund (VCF) to provide compensation for economic losses and harm as an alternative to the current litigation system.

Provides liability protections for the WTC contractors and the City of New York.

More information about H.R. 847:

The cost of the bill is \$7.4 billion and the measure is fully paid-for.

The revenue offset targets "treaty shopping," where foreign multinational corporations reduce the U.S. taxes they owe by routing U.S.-raised revenue through subsidiaries in third-party countries that have tax-reducing treaties with America.